

# Institutional rhythms : Combining practice theory and rhythmanalysis to conceptualise processes of institutionalisation

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**Abstract :** The practice turn in social theory has renewed interest in conceptualising the temporal organisation of social life as a way of explaining contemporary patterns of living and consuming. As a result, the interest to develop analyses of time in both practice theories and practice theory-based empirical research is increasing. Practice theorists draw on theories of time and ideas about temporal rhythms to explain how practices are organised in everyday life. To date, they have studied how temporal experiences matter for the coordination of daily life, how temporal landscapes matter for issues of societal synchronisation, and how timespace/s matter for the organisation of human activity. While several studies refer to, draw on, and position themselves in relation to ideas about temporal rhythms, those working with theories of practice have yet to fully utilise the potential of Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis for explaining the constitution of, and more specifically, changes within, social life. I argue that rhythmanalysis can be effectively combined with practice theory to better articulate the ways in which practices become connected through what I describe as processes of institutionalisation. I argue that this combination requires repositioning the role of time in theories of practice as neither experience, nor as landscape, but, building on Schatzki's work on *The Timespace of Human Activity*, as practice itself. Drawing on Lefebvre's concepts of arrhythmia and eurhythmia, and developing Parkes and Thrift's notion of entrainment, I illustrate how institutional rhythms, as self-organising, open, spatiotemporal practices emerge, endure, and evolve in ways that matter for both socio-temporal landscapes and temporal experiences.

**Keywords :** Practices, repetition, institutions, time, rhythms